

At the end of page 7, line 4, please insert the paragraph:

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--The invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiment. Obviously, modifications and alterations will occur to others upon reading and understanding the preceding detailed description. It is intended that the invention be construed as including all such modifications and alterations insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.--

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On page 8, after the heading "Claims", please insert:

--Having thus described the preferred embodiment, the invention is now claimed to be:--

In the Claims:

Please amend ~~claims~~ 1-7 as follows:

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1. (Amended) A crossflow ceramic membrane filtering unit comprising:  
a housing;  
one or more filtering elements partly coated  
with a filtering membrane;  
joints between the filtering elements and between the filtering elements and the housing being sealed by means of a gasket or a gasket system which defines an internal intermediate space.
  2. (Amended) The ceramic membrane filtering unit according to claim 1, wherein the intermediate space is connected to the outside of the filtering unit.
  3. (Amended) The ceramic membrane filtering unit according to claim 1 further including:

a sensor for indicating fluid leaking into the intermediate space.

4. (Amended) The ceramic membrane filtering unit according to claim 1 wherein the filtering elements include one or more plate-shaped filtering elements having apertures, said elements being jointed together and to the housing, said apertures thereby forming a tight, unitary conduit for permeate removal and the outer surface of the elements being essentially free to receive material to be filtered, the plate-shaped elements being fitted to each other and to the housing by means of at least two gaskets, and central zones of the elements being impermeable so as to form spaces delimited by the gaskets and the impermeable surfaces, and said spaces being interconnected by apertures in the elements, said apertures having impermeable surfaces.

5. (Amended) The ceramic membrane filtering unit according to claim 1 wherein the filtering elements include at least one tubular filtering element having at least one channel internally coated with a filtering membrane.

6. (Amended) A method for sealing a ceramic crossflow membrane filtering unit comprising one or more filtering elements within a housing, said elements being partly coated with a filtering membrane, the method comprising:

sealing joints between the elements and between the elements and the housing by a gasket or a gasket system comprising an internal space connected to the outside.

7. (Amended) The method according to claim 6 further including:  
filtering water.

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Please add ~~new~~ claims 8-17 as follows:

8. (New) The method according to claim 7 further including ultrafiltering water.

~~9.~~ (New) A crossflow membrane filtering unit comprising:

at least one filter element having a feed surface over which a feed liquid flows and a discharge surface from which a permeate flow is discharged;

a seal assembly disposed between the filter element and one of another filter element and a housing, the seal assembly including:

an inner seal in fluid communication with the feed liquid flow,

an outer seal in fluid communication with the permeate flow, and

a channel between the inner and outer seals, the channel in communication with a leakage discharge channel such that liquid discharge through the discharge channel is indicative of leakage through at least one of the inner and outer seals.

10. (New) The crossflow membrane filtering unit according to claim 9 wherein the at least one filter element includes:

a plurality of filter plates, each plate having an aperture defined by the discharge surface, an impermeable surface surrounding the aperture, and the feed surface surrounding the impermeable surface, the plates being stacked with the apertures in alignment and the seal assembly between the impermeable surfaces of adjacent plates.

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11. (New) The crossflow membrane filtering unit according to claim 10 wherein the inner and outer seals each include an annular gasket, the inner and outer gaskets being spaced to define the channel.

12. (New) The crossflow membrane filtering unit according to claim 9 wherein the filter element includes:

5 an interior bore extending between end surfaces, the interior bore being surrounded by the inflow surface; the end surfaces being impermeable, the seal assembly being disposed between at least one end surface and a housing in which the filtering element is received.

13. (New) The crossflow membrane filtering unit according to claim 9 wherein the filter element includes:

5 an interior bore defined by the inflow surface; a peripheral surface having an impermeable ring at least at one end and the permeate surface defined thereadjacent;

10 the seal assembly between being disposed between the impermeable ring and a housing in which the filter element is received.

14. (New) The crossflow membrane filtering unit according to claim 9 further including:

a sensor disposed in communication with the channel for sensing a presence of liquid in the channel.

15. (New) A method of ceramic membrane filtering comprising:

5 flowing a feed liquid over a feed surface of a filter element and discharging a permeate liquid from a discharge surface of the filter element, the feed liquid and the permeate liquid being separated from each other by a seal assembly disposed between the filter element and at

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